expressed their apprehension in July, 1996 about the safety of the product of Ordnance Factory, Chandrapur caused by the proposed blasting in opencast coal mine in Baranj block offered to NDIL in October, 1993. On receipt of the advice, the Ministry of Defence was informed that coal mining in about 40 coal mines with a total reserve of about 1000 million tonnes is going on within a radius of 25 Kms. from the Ordnance Factory, Chandrapur for production of 18 million tonnes of coal per year for many years and that Ministry of Coal was not advised over the past three decades of any adverse effect of such mining activity on the Ordnance Factory. Ministry of Defence was also requested to inform the Ministry of Coal on the law prohibiting mining operations within a radius of 25 Kms. from Ordnance Factories. The response from Ministry of Defence is awaited.

(d) to (f) Do not arise in view of answer given to paras (a) and (b).

**Unauthorised Tea Gardens in West Bengal**

2691. SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to refer to reply given to Unstarred Question No. 1603 dated the August 16, 1995 and state:

(a) the check maintained in respect of quality of tea being produced by unauthorised tea gardens in various districts of Darjeeling, Uttar Dinajpur, Jalpaiguri and Govebehar;

(b) whether due to the inferior quality of tea produced by such gardens bring bad name for our country in the International Market; and

(c) the steps Government propose to take to check mushrooming of unauthorised tea gardens?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (DR. BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) and (b) No complaint has been received by the Tea Board about production of inferior quality of tea in the gardens of West Bengal. All tea has to conform to specifications laid down in the prevention of Food Adulteration Act, 1954.

(c) Land and its use are regulated under laws made by the State Governments who enforce them and prevent misuse of land.

**TWRF Scheme**

2692. SHRI MRUTYUNJAYA NAYAK: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the office of Regional Textile Commissioner, Amritsar vide D.O. No.8(331)/IND/Tex/ASR/ 169-70 dated June 17, 1993 regarding release of compensation to the victims of closed unit M/s Himachal Worsted Mills Ltd., Nalagarh under the TWRF scheme had stated that the compensation under the scheme will be released to these workers after the receipt of budget from the competent authority as the matter has been under consideration of the competent authority;

(b) if so, how the Government have stated in reply given to USQ No. 603 dated July 25, 1997 that the TWRF scheme has not been extended to the Government sector mills and the justification therefor;

(c) the action proposed against the officials found negligent in this regard; and

(d) the steps taken to immediate release of payment to these affected workers?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Government of India operates the Textile Workers' Rehabilitation Fund Scheme (TWRFS) to provide interim relief to workers rendered jobless due to permanent/partial closure of the mills. The scheme has not so far been extended to Central and State Textile PSUs and this matter is still under consideration.

(c) and (d) Do not arise in view of the above.

**Promotion of Officer who is Under CBI Investigation**

2693. SHRI P.S. GADHAVI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) attention of the Govt. is invited to a news-item captioned "CBI soft pedals Sensitive Case" appeared in the Indian Express dated the June 30, 1997 and state:

(b) the circumstances under the named officer was promoted and posed at priced place when the CBI investigation were underway and findings thereof not yet completed;

(c) whether any responsibility has been fixed under the circumstances; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the action taken or being taken for its proper investigation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) to (d) The Officer referred to in the news item captioned "CBI soft pedals sensitive case" that appeared in the Indian Express dated the June 30, 1997 has not been promoted yet and posted to any place in higher position.

In view of above, the question of fixing of responsibility and action against those responsible for the alleged promotion of the officer referred to in the news-item does not arise.

**Fifth Pay Commission Report**

2694. SHRI SOMJIBHAI DAMOR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 5030 dated May 7, 1997 and state:

(a) the punitive action taken against M/s. Bahari Brothers and Nabhi Publications for printing and publishing of Fifth pay Commission Report without permission of the Government;

(b) whether any survey has been conducted in regard to illegal publication and sale of Government Publications by private publishers;

(c) if so, the findings thereof, and if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps being taken by the Government to curb such illegal trade practices?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) to (d) Information is being collected from the Department of Personnel and Training and the Ministry of Urban Affairs and Employment and will be laid on the Table of the House.

**Advance Ruling Authority**

2695. SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to set up an advance ruling authority for customs and excise and a directorate of valuation;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the justification for setting up such bodies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) There is no proposal as yet to set up any advance ruling authority. However, a Directorate of Valuation (Customs & Central Excise) has been set up at Mumbai vide an Order dt. 2.6.97.

(b) and (c) The Directorate of Valuation will initially concentrate on issues relating to under valuation and valuation frauds in the context of customs valuation of imported goods. Subsequently, it will also look into the aspects of central excise valuation. The Directorate would disseminate information with regard to international prices to various customs formations and monitor the valuation practices. Presently, a Commissioner level officer heads the Directorate and he is assisted by a compliment of staff. The Directorate has been set up in an effort to tackle under valuation and valuation frauds, particularly in relation to imports, with the purpose of having greater intelligence in customs valuation matters and to check manipulation in customs valuation.

*[Translation]*

**Amlo Project**

2696. SHRI RAVINDRA KUMAR PANDEY: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware of sensational robbery incident in Amlo project;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the vigilance wing of the Central Coal Fields Ltd. has started enquiry into this;

(d) whether the enquiry has since been completed; and

(e) if so, the number of departmental officers and other persons against whom action has been taken/ propposed to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) On 5th July, 1994 at about 1.30 a.m. four robbers entered into the Cash Section of Amlo Project office of Central Coalfields Limited (CCL) by overpowering the security guard on duty at the main gate. The robbers entered into the strong room, broke open the safe and cash boxes inside the safe and took away an amount of Rs. 7.5 Lakhs approximately.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) A First Information Report has been lodged with the Bermo Police Station. Moreover, major penalty proceedings have been initiated against five executives and six non-executives of CCL on various charges of negligence in duty.

*[English]*

**Circular to Honour Bhansali Cheques**

2697. SHRI SANAT MEHTA:

SHRI AJAY MUKHOPADHYAY:

Will the Minister of FINNACE be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news item appearing in the Statesman, Calcutta dated June 17, 1997 captioned "CGM asked all SBI branches to honour Bhansali cheques;

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto;

(c) whether a circular was issued as alleged, on Feb. 13, 1997 by the Cheif General Manager of State Bank of India, Mumbai circle; and

(d) if so, the content of the circular and its administrative propriety?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) State Bank of India (SBI) has informed that according to the bank's normal practice, a circular was issued after approval of the facility of 'at par' encashment of fixed deposit refund orders/interest warrants/brokerage warrants to CRB capital Markets Ltd. by the concerned sanctioning authourity (in this case the Deputy General Manager of Mumbai Main Branch of the bank). The Circular was issued by the Banking Operations Department, Mumbai Local Head Office under the signature of the Circle Financial Officer. All circular instructions, after sanction at appropriate levels, are issued with the legend "for Chief